

(c) To encourage export of leather products, Government has taken a number of promotional measures which inter-alia include

(i) duty free import of leather in raw, semi finished form to supplement domestic availability of leather,

(ii) import of other raw materials, consumables, accessories, chemicals and capital goods with concessional duties

(iii) strengthening design and development programmes,

(iv) augmenting manpower training both within the country or outside,

(v) establishing industrial estates and promoting common facility centres and

(vi) improving quality of Indian leather products and making them more competitive in the world market

(d) and (e) The Government policy is to progressively displace the exports of raw materials by value-added leather products and towards this end, exports of raw hides and skins and semi-finished leather have already been banned. Export of finished leather, though allowed at present, is subject to an export duty of 10%.

Merger of AFCL with NABARD

4994 SHRIMOHAN RAWALE Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state

(a) whether various committees set up by the Union Government from time to time have suggested that the Agricultural Finance Corporation Limited be converted into a subsidiary of the National Bank for Agricultural and Rural Development to ensure better results in the field of agriculture and rural development,

(b) whether any decision has since been taken,

(c) if so the details thereof and,

(d) if not, the reasons therefor and the time by which the decision is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH) (a) to (c) The role of Agricultural Finance Corporation Ltd (AFC) was received by the Committee to Review Arrangement for Institutional Credit for Agriculture and Rural Development (CRAFTCARD) in 1981. The Committee had recommended the continuance of AFC as an independent consultancy organisation with close links with the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD). AFC continues to be an autonomous body, providing consultancy services both in India and abroad and carrying out its activities in an objective manner, as an independent organisation.

(d) In view of the above, the question does not arise.

[Translation]

Patrolling Boats in EEZ

4995 SHRI MUMTAZ ANSARI
SHRIMATI SHEELA GAUTAM

SHRI RAJESH KUMAR

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state

(a) the total area of the Exclusive Economic Zone,

(b) the estimated number of patrolling boats required to keep vigil in this area,

(c) the number of boats which are in operation at present, and

(d) the number of boats which are likely to be engaged for this purpose in the next two years?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) The total area of the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone is 20.13 lakh sq Km

(b) to (d): The force levels of the Coast Guard are being developed in accordance with the Coast Guard Plan 2000 and the five-yearly Coast Guard Development Plans, subject to the availability of funds. The number of patrol boats with the Coast Guard is also being enhanced progressively to enable them to discharge their patrolling duties effectively

Smuggling Through Green Channel

4996. SHRI MUMTAZ ANSARI
SHRIMATI SHEELA GAUTAM
SHRI RAJESH KUMAR

Will the Minister of FINANCE be

pleased to state:

(a) whether some cases of smuggling of electronics and other items by passengers passing through green channel at Bombay, Delhi, Madras and Calcutta airports have come to the notice of the Government

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to check such evasion of customs duty?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) Yes, Sir,

(b) The number of cases and value of goods including electronic goods seized during the last one year by the customs authorities from passengers passing through green channel at the international airports located at Bombay, Madras and Calcutta are as follows -

AIRPORTS	NO. OF CASES	VALUE (Rs. in lacs)
Bombay	1986	375.0
Madras	14	30.9
Calcutta	165	165.0

At Delhi airport, the total number of cases of concealment/misdeclaration by passengers was 3137 and value of goods involved was Rs. 240 lacs for the year 1991. At Delhi airport record is not maintained for cases of concealment/misdeclaration separately in respect of red and green channels.

(c) Customs authorities are alert against smuggling activities. Intelligence is targeted against such activities. Sophisticated equip-

ments such as X-ray, baggage metal detectors etc. are being increasingly used. Preventive and Intelligence officers maintain surveillance and take appropriate action for interception of suspicious persons.

Export of Price

4997. SHRI B.L. SHARMA PREM :
SHRI PHOOL CHAND VARMA :
SHRI DHARMA BIKSHAM :